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THE CRAYON.

NEW YORK, JUNE 18, 1855.

Sketchings.

THE SKETCHER.—No. III.

THERE is an inestimable value, to the student of Nature, in the lead-pencil. For minute-study of landscape, oil-color has excellences all its own; and for sketches of effect and general color, water-color is preferable; but, for the accumulation of fact, the development of individual character, the pencil is by far the most valuable means of study we have—and, if you add its varieties, the black chalk, or Conté pencil, and the white chalk crayon, you have included capacities for the representation of light, and shade, and tone; and, if you have a colorist's eye, you may be almost independent of color in your studies.

It is so charming to wander over the hills encumbered only with a light portfolio and case of three or four pencils, and, when you have found a passage of distance that you like, or a form in the foreground of high beauty or expressiveness, to note it down in delicate lines and shades, without having to fill up your paper with objects you care nothing about. It is understood that with your pencil drawings completeness of the whole is not demanded, and you may draw as little as you please, so long as the little is well drawn, and minutely. I will say something of the manner of drawing I have found the most advantageous with the pencil, and, perhaps, there may be valuable hints for others. And, firstly, let it be understood that I speak of sketching or drawing from Nature simply, not picture-making. Some artists prefer a coarsely toothed paper, which shall take the pencil readily, and produce, with little manual labor, a broad and strong effect; but it seems to me that this is much more easily attained by India-ink used in broad washes, and it loses that which is the great charm of the lead-pencil, delicacy and minute accuracy. It is for form, mainly, that the firm, sharp point is desirable, and this form cannot be too carefully and closely studied. I prefer, therefore, a fine smooth paper, even a light Bristol board, which not only admits the most delicate manipulation, but suggests care and concentration of study by the value of the material. Then, having selected the subject, I make a sketchy outline with a very soft pencil, and marking very lightly, and, at the outset, taking great care to get the size of the masses correctly indicated. This done, I take a hard pencil, and commencing with the extreme distance, draw the outlines of the most minute objects visible. If the distance be of far off mountains, or if atmosphere and haze give it a softness as of great distance, I use a pencil as hard as Faber's H H; and, as I work towards the foreground, use softer degrees, reserving the softest, B B, for the nearest work. This outline drawn firmly, I rub the drawing gently with the crumb of half-stale bread* to remove

the marks of the first outline, and part even of the second in the distances, leaving it there as faint as it can be, and be readily perceptible. Then, taking a hard pencil, sharpened to a needle point, and bearing on very lightly, I tone down the furthest distance to a flat shade, keeping it rather lighter than it is ultimately intended to be, and then, with the same point, draw in the shadows, if there are any in this distance—and only in very far off mountains will you find none.

As I approach the foreground, I change my hard pencils for softer ones, but only when the hard pencil will no longer give the requisite depth of tone. The great advantage in this is, that the harder point being more under command, will leave, when properly handled, fewer inequalities of line, and you may hatch and stipple your distances until no mark shall be visible to the naked eye; and in whatever material you work, you will find that the marks which betray the manipulation, brush marks in oils; cutting edges in water-color or pencil lines in our present style, interfere with the expression of space. The finer and closer you make your lines, therefore, so as to appear the most like a flat tint, the more perfect will be your quality of distance. But, you must never use the "stump" to get flatness of tint, or to express distance. This produces a heavy, dull tone, very unlike the clearness of that which fine lines or stippling produces. This you will feel at once by comparing a stump drawing with an engraving, where the greater clearness and brilliancy of the latter will be at once evident. Another advantage of using hard points is, that the drawing so made will be much less likely to smear or be defaced. If your drawing should still seem harsh in the distance, a gentle rubbing with the bread crumb will soften it, and make it more even; and over this again you may work with your hard pencil.

In the nearer portions of the study, no such care will be requisite. In the foreground and middle distances, there are lines and spots of all kinds constantly visible, and you may have many in your drawing without injury. Only be careful to follow the forms as far as possible by your lines. If a passage of broad shadow occur in the foreground, observe that it is flat or without much change, and do not use a stump, because, as in the distance, you will find that the multiplicity of lines will give you all you desire, with a clearness of tone impossible over a smeared paper. The brilliancy of an engraving, is owing to its showing the pure white paper between the black lines. This, in a mezzotint, is wanting, and the relation between the two is exactly that between a stump drawing and one done with the point. It will cost you more labor, perhaps, to do it all with the pencil, but this cost is never to be considered for a moment. To do the thing in the best manner, is the only subject of thought, not how it may most easily be got over. In massed foliage, you may work broadly, with reference only to the

general effect of light and shade, but, in the outline, following the actual termination of the limbs and sprays closely.

The rendering of color, which some artists talk of in a monochrome drawing, is an absurdity. You cannot even suggest it. A person who is thoroughly acquainted with Nature, may be able to feel the color of objects presented; but he does it from his own knowledge, not from the drawing. A dark colored object must be presented dark, so as to keep its relations to the rest of the drawing as such; but whether it be blue, red, or yellow, is a matter of indifference. Harding draws as if all objects were of one tone, giving a dark object in the foreground the same force as a light one, at the same distance from the eye, and no more; but this is evidently wrong, as will be seen by reference to a photograph, or to a good engraving.

For drawings of foreground objects, the Conté in wood serves a most admirable purpose, giving perfect blackness instead of the metallic grey of the lead pencil. It is, however, more difficult to work in, and is very brittle, beside rubbing off much more easily. Its general effect is that of the lithograph.

We neglect the study of skies too much, and here the pencil, in some of its varieties, must be our dependence. The forms of clouds change so rapidly, that it is impossible to study them carefully in oil or water-color—they must be caught by the pencil or chalk. Perhaps the best material is white chalk, on grey-tinted paper, indicating the shadowed sides of the clouds with pencil. Clouds are, as masses, generally light against the sky, and white chalk will work with sufficient minuteness to realize all that we can paint of their forms. In studies of this kind, the horizon should be drawn, with some index as to the height of the clouds from it, because their texture differs materially with distance or elevation, and a cloud studied from the sky half-way to the zenith, will make a poor figure near the horizon.

And here, by the way, let me add a caution against using grey, or "tone paper," in any way, except for the use above indicated, for the study of the skies. It makes the labor easy, but as you only work to learn, this amounts only to saying that the paper-maker has done part of your work for you, and deprived you, at the same time, of the opportunity of learning something. An experienced artist may use it for memoranda, but in any case, I believe that the memorandum would be better, and the knowledge acquired greater if white paper were used. Experience is the only true labor-saver in Art.

JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL, the recently elected Professor of Languages at Harvard, sailed from this port on Monday, 4th, for Europe. He will proceed directly to Germany, where he will remain several months, then proceed to Spain. It is not true that he will follow the track of Don Quixote, though he may visit La Mancha. The Don's footsteps have been followed some years since by an eccentric Englishman, who has written a book on his expedition.

* Never use India-rubber where you want to make a very fine drawing; for, if it does not leave a smear of

plumbago, it rubs up the surface of a fine paper, and makes it impossible to draw delicately on it.

THE last two numbers of *Putnam's* give token of a change in the management, by a striking increase in the excellence in the quality of the magazine. They are exceedingly readable. We extract from the June number a poem by Bryant, in a new vein for him:—

ROBERT OF LINCOLN.

Merrily swinging on bar and weed,
Near to the nest of his little dame,
Over the mountain-side or mead,
Robert of Lincoln is telling his name;
Bob-o'-link, bob-o'-link,
Spink, spank, spink;
Snug and safe is that nest of ours,
Hidden among the summer flowers.
Chee, chee, chee.

Robert of Lincoln is gaily dressed,
Wearing a bright black wedding coat;
White are his shoulders and white his crest,
Hear him call in his merry note—
Bob-o'-link, bob-o'-link,
Spink, spank, spink;
Look, what a nice new coat is mine,
Sure there was never a bird so fine.
Chee, chee, chee.

Robert of Lincoln's Quaker wife,
Pretty and quiet, with plain brown wings,
Passing at home a patient life,
Broods in the grass while her husband sings
Bob-o'-link, bob-o'-link,
Spink, spank, spink;
Brood, kind creature; you need not fear
Thieves and robbers while I am here.
Chee, chee, chee.

Modest and shy as a nun is she;
One weak chirp is her only note.
Braggart and prince of braggarts is he,
Pouring boasts from his little throat—
Bob-o'-link, bob-o'-link,
Spink, spank, spink;
Never was I afraid of man;
Catch me, cowardly knaves, if you can.
Chee, chee, chee.

Six white eggs on a bed of hay,
Flecked with purple, a pretty sight!
There as the mother sits all day
Robert is singing with all his might
Bob-o'-link, bob-o'-link,
Spink, spank, spink;
Nice good wife, that never goes out,
Keeping house while I frolic about.
Chee, chee, chee.

Soon as the little ones chirp the shell,
Six wide mouths are open for food;
Robert of Lincoln bestirs him well,
Gathering seeds for the hungry brood.
Bob-o'-link, bob-o'-link,
Spink, spank, spink;
This new life is likely to be
Hard for a gay young fellow like me.
Chee, chee, chee.

Robert of Lincoln at length is made
Sober with work, and silent with care;
Off is his holiday garment laid,
Half forgotten that merry air,
Bob-o'-link, bob-o'-link,
Spink, spank, spink;
Nobody knows but my mate and I
Where our nest and our nestlings lie.
Chee, chee, chee.

Summer wanes; the children are grown;
Fun and frolic no more he knows;
Robert of Lincoln's a humdrum drone;
Off he flies, and we sing as he goes
Bob-o'-link, bob-o'-link,
Spink, spank, spink;

When you can pipe that merry old strain
Robert of Lincoln come back again.
Chee, chee, chee.

FOREIGN ART GOSSIP.

SIR RODERICK MURCHISON, we understand, was sent for by Prince Albert on Thursday, to consult on the project of a general gathering of our Learned and Artistic Bodies, under one roof, at Burlington House. This project has, for the moment, taken precedence of the Gore House scheme. Some objections to the amalgamation, especially those of distance and inaccessibility from the north side of Hyde Park, are removed by this change of site. Next Friday a committee of the Royal Society will meet to receive and consider propositions. Somerset House had set itself against Gore House. Old rights of occupancy—comfortable quarters—love of independence and isolation—perhaps a desire to stand apart from other and younger associations—made it difficult to obtain a strong adhesion from the Royal Society in favor of the concentration of the Learned Bodies in one locality at Gore House. Lord Wrottesley, however, pronounced in favor of a union at the Academy dinner. "I trust," said the noble President of the Royal Society,—"I trust that the professors of Science and Art will, ere long, find a home in some convenient spot in this great metropolis, in some building worthy of the nation and the age in which we live, and worthy of the services that both Science and Art have rendered to this country and to mankind in general." We sincerely trust that these wise words imply the adhesion of the Royal Society to a scheme for concentration.

Sir Charles Eastlake tried to wring a promise from Lord Palmerston at the Academy dinner, but the Minister would not confess. Lord Palmerston admitted the inadequacy of the space at command—especially in the sculpture-room;—he remembered his old joint action with Sir Robert Peel in favor of enlarging this area; but then the dinner was such a capital dinner, the pictures exhibited were so beautiful, the manifestations of genius were so complete, the Government care of Art was so warm, and the Arts themselves were so useful, so productive, so ennobling—that, in point of fact, he trusted—nay, he believed—that when scattered over the face of the land, these noble works of Art would serve to kindle the flame of genius in many a youthful mind! Not a word would the Minister say about the cramped statuary—the crowded pictures—the dark octagon room. These things are left, we infer, to other hands and other minds.

The appointments of Sir Charles Eastlake and Mr. Wornum are still, we assume, "under consideration"; though the salaries of these officers appear in the Miscellaneous Estimates. Our small picture-gallery costs us for the year no less than 17,696*l.* Of this sum 1000*l.* stands in the name of the Director; 800*l.* in that of the Secretary; 300*l.* in that of the Travelling Agent. By whom the last named office is to be filled we have not heard. Beside this round figure, another item of no less than 1,155*l.* is set down for "travelling and incidental expenses." The money paid for the De Bammerville pictures was 1,088*l.* 16*s.*; that for the Gherardine collection of models in wax and terracotta, 2,110*l.* The Trustees of the Gallery take a credit of 10,000*l.* for the purchase of pictures during the current year.

In the Miscellaneous Estimates for the current year—section of Education, Science, and Art—we find 20,000*l.* set down as additional expenses for the building within the quadrangle of the British Museum. This makes 106,000*l.* spent on that account. 4,000*l.* are placed to the credit of the Museum for the purchases at the Bernal sale; 12,000*l.* are placed for the same purpose to the credit of Marlborough House. These are vast sums of money; and

unless it be allowed that the nation *ought* to give fancy prices for certain articles, merely because they come out of certain collections, we fear that in some cases the nation has made an indifferent bargain.—*Athenaeum.*

DIFFERING widely from each other in style, the Spanish schools of painting are distinguished by a severe devotional character, which is common to all. During the period of their growth and vigor, it was rarely that a Spanish artist employed his pencil on any secular subject except portraiture. Unlike the Italian, he is hardly ever to be found in the fields of profane mythology and history. Zion Hill and Siloam Brook delighted him more than Parnassus or Ida, the Xanthus or the Orontes. In the Golden Legend he found his Iliad and Odyssey, and Art of Love.

Many causes combined to produce this severity of style. The long struggle with the Saracens not only discouraged, while it lasted, intellectual culture, but even after it had ended in the overthrow of the Crescent, left the Castilian, who gloried in the name of "Old Christian," strongly prejudiced against everything which had not grown up under the shadow of the Cross. That enthusiasm for classical antiquity, its literature and Art, which was first kindled by Petrarch, and soon flamed in all the courts and cloisters of Italy, never communicated itself to the national mind of Spain, or extended beyond the bosoms of a few students in the seats of learning. Even at Alcala and Salamanca, St. Jerome was always more popular than Cicero. In Antonio de Nebrija, Castile may boast of a scholar, who was worthy of being a contemporary of Valla and Erasmus. But even in Cardinal Ximenes, the most munificent patron of learning whom she has ever known, she by no means possessed a Lorenzo or a Leo. To promote and improve the study of Theology was the sole end and aim of his literary and scholastic foundations; and for the poetry and philosophy of Greece and Rome, he cared no more than he did for that Moorish literature which he consigned to the flames at Granada. His regard for learning, as learning, may be estimated by a remarkable passage in the preface to the Polyglot Bible,—the noblest monument of his munificence, and one of the most beautiful achievements of the press—where the reader is informed that he will find the Latin version of the blessed Jerome placed between the septuagint Greek and the original Hebrew of the Scriptures, like our Lord crucified between two thieves.—*Life of Valezquez.*

In all I have said, therefore, of deception of the eye, I have only meant deception for a moment or at a distance; for Nature allows of no substitutes that will bear continued or close inspection. And yet, while she has placed this beyond the reach of human hands, she has intrusted Art with a peculiar mission—the power, as I have said, of doing something for the world which she herself refuses to do. How many of her most exquisite forms, graces, and movements—how many of her most beautiful combinations of colors, of lights, and shadows that are "instant seen and instant gone" does she not permit the painter to transfix for the delight of ages! And, indeed, he is intrusted with another, and a higher task, that of leading us to a perception of many of her latent beauties, and of many of her appearances which the unassisted eye might not recognize as beauties, but for the direction of the pencil. These considerations, alone are enough to show that Art has a place assigned to it in the great scheme of beneficence by which man is allowed to be the instrument of adding not only to his sources of innocent enjoyment, but of instruction. "Painting and sculpture," says Richardson, "are not necessary to our being; brutes and savage men subsist without them; but to our happiness as rational creatures, they are absolutely so."—*Leslie.*

THE DRAWINGS of the great masters have a peculiar charm. These it is, more than any other works, which introduce the student into the secret laboratory of art, so that he may follow a painting from the first germ through its various stages and changes, till it attains its perfect form. Mr. Von Rumohr, with his usual refined sense of Art, directs our attention to the true mechanical instinct, with which these old masters always employed in their drawings the material best adapted to the object they had in view. If they were desirous of noting down a first thought just as it arose in the fancy, they usually chose the red Italian chalk, with which sketching is so easy, or the soft Italian black chalk. The breadth and softness of the strokes immediately gave to such a first sketch something picturesque and massy; while at the same time, the material allowed of a high degree of finish, if desirable. But if they wished to arrest a rapidly-passing effect in nature, to seize an accidental, happy, quickly-changing cast of drapery, or to mark sharply and distinctly the main features of some character, the pen was preferred, which allowed them to unite the easy flowing line with the sure and distinct indication of forms. If, on the other hand, they aimed to express in a portrait or study the most delicate movements of forms, and a fine play of surface within the outline, they generally took a silver point. On paper covered with a mixture of white lead and yellow ochre, verdigris, or some red, such a pencil marks but lightly and softly, and therefore allows of alterations and improvements *ad infinitum*, and by pressing harder, marks decidedly that design which the artist finally prefers. Or if their chief object was the broad distribution of light and shade, the full camel's-hair brush, dipped in sepia or India-ink, with its elastic point and its bold breadth, led the most rapidly and surely to this end. In such drawings the outlines of the forms are often not indicated, but result only from the limits of the shadows. When it was required, at the same time, to indicate the form, the use of the pen was added. Lastly for a more detailed marking of lights and shades, coloured paper afforded them a middle tint, by the help of which they produced, with black chalk in the shadows, and white in the lights, a very delicate gradation and a great relief of the parts. On account of these many advantages, this mode of drawing has been very commonly used. It is only after having seen a number of such drawings that we can judge how conscientiously a composition has been prepared, and better understand and appreciate the marvellous perfection of the pictures of Raphael and his time, which were the result of a long series of studies by the most highly-gifted minds. Now, if no branch of the study of art is more attractive than that of drawings, certainly there is none more difficult. Nothing but the most intimate familiarity with the feelings of the masters as they are expressed in every line, can serve as a sure guide in this labyrinth. For there is not only an infinite number of studies made by very eminent artists, for instance, by the Carracci, after the works of Michael Angelo, Raphael, &c., with much spirit, and great skill, but both in early and later times, skillful individuals have made it their business to derive a profitable income from the imitation of the drawing of great masters. Hence there is no other kind of collections so unequally composed as that of drawings, inasmuch as the most admirable original is often seen side by side with an indifferent copy.—*Dr. Waagen.*

THE history of the heart of a man of genius is of as great importance, and is as much the property of his posterity, as the history of his mind: the emotions are the nurses of the faculties, and the first home is the sanctuary in which they are created and reared.

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